

PRESBYTERY OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND
REGULAR MEETING OF THE PRESBYTERY ROUNDTABLE
January 10, 2019

The Roundtable of the Presbytery of Southern New England met in the Smart Room of the Westminster Presbyterian Church in West Hartford, Connecticut. The meeting was called to order with prayer and opening devotions at 9:35 a.m. by the Co-Chair of the Roundtable, Rev. David Van Dyke.

A **QUORUM** was present.

Present were: David Van Dyke, co-chair of Roundtable; Chris Tate, Moderator of the Presbytery (via video conference); Ruth Smalt, Vice Moderator of the Presbytery (via video conference); Doug Ray; J. C. Cadwallader; Barbara Riihimaki; Art Riihimaki; Lisa Baker (via video conference); Jenny Davis; Virginia Smanik; Ralph Reynolds; Tom Taylor; Kevin White (via teleconference); Dick Hasbany; and Anne Fuhrmeister.

Also present were: Ex-Officio members: the Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo, General Presbyter; and the Rev. David Baer, Stated Clerk.

Excused was: Julie Emery

The General Presbyter, the Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo, presented her report to the Roundtable. Ms. Vance-Ocampo gave an update on the Smart Room at Westminster Presbyterian Church and the move to use Google Drive, which will be available to the Roundtable for posting meeting materials at the next meeting. She also discussed recent changes to tax laws and their impact on churches, including tax implications of parking spaces reserved for clergy. The Board of Pensions is requesting that mid-councils send letters to elected officials in support of removing these provisions.

Following the resignation of the assistant treasurer and given the approaching end of the current treasurer's term, the Presbytery will need to elect both of these officers. We will need to suspend the provision of the bylaws that requires that officer nominees be presented at the March meeting (which no longer takes place) and are to be elected at the May meeting.

Ms. Vance-Ocampo will be undergoing surgery, and this will prevent her attendance at the February Stated Meeting of the Presbytery. She has provided a list of ministers within the Presbytery who can respond to pastoral emergencies, which will be sent out to the Presbytery.

Upon the request of the General Presbyter, the Roundtable **VOTED** to **RECOMMEND** that the Presbytery **AUTHORIZE** the celebration of the Lord's Supper during the upcoming leadership retreat at Stony Point Center.

The Rev. J. C. Cadwallader, co-chair of the Valley Administrative Commission, provided a brief update of the Commission's work with the Valley Presbyterian Church. The church has resumed worship in their sanctuary as of the beginning of December. The air quality in the upper level of the building is safe, though remediation is still ongoing in the lower level. The

Commission is developing a set of criteria for returning jurisdiction over property matters to the church's Session. Ms. Vance-Ocampo reported on the progress of the search for an interim pastor: the Committee on Ministry has just approved the position description. There will be significant costs associated with remediation of the oil spill. Ms. Cadwallader commended the work of the Rev. Johanna Johns Jung in providing care to the congregation, as well as the clerk, Cheryl Freeston, for bearing up as a leader under difficult circumstances.

The Roundtable welcomed, via teleconference, the Rev. Terrlyn Curry-Avery, interim pastor of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Presbyterian Church in Springfield, Massachusetts. The church is requesting a waiver of per capita for the current year. Ms. Curry-Avery reminded members of the Roundtable that her salary is supported by the Presbytery, and that the church, though active in its ministry, is challenged with respect to its finances. Ralph Reynolds, President of the Trustees, estimated that the total amount (including the share designated for the Synod of the Northeast and the General Assembly) would amount to about \$1,400. He proposed as an alternative that a donation be provided to the congregation to allow it to pay its per capita, and certain individuals present expressed a willingness to contribute the necessary funds via personal check.

The Rev. David Baer, the Stated Clerk, presented a draft docket for the Stated Meeting on February 9 and received feedback. Mr. Baer led a discussion of proposed amendments to the Constitution of the PC (U.S.A.). The Presbytery will vote on the amendments at the February Stated Meeting.

The Rev. Jenny Davis gave a report on work of the Personnel Committee. Staff reviews were conducted in October. The Committee is working on a new staffing model for the Presbytery, with the aim of reducing personnel costs, beginning this month. The Committee is also participating in the search for a new Treasurer.

The Roundtable welcomed Dayle Larson, the Presbytery's bookkeeper, via teleconference to join Ralph Reynolds in explaining the process of developing an annual budget for the Presbytery. Each annual budget is based on the previous year's budget, making adjustments as needed. Dayle Larson sends out e-mails to the chairs of committees and boards, asking whether they need a change in their budget. The input of the Personnel Committee is especially critical, as they make changes to the staffing structure.

The Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo provided an update on the situation at the Woodbury church in Warwick, following the fire in November. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has sent representatives and is providing support. A nearby Roman Catholic church is providing worship space, and state and federal investigations into the cause of the fire are ongoing. The pastor, the Rev. T.J. DeMarco, is caring for a congregation that has experienced a significant trauma, and the Committee on Ministry is looking to provide him with opportunities for rest and renewal. Doug Ray provided information on his congregation's efforts, just beginning, toward demolition of the old structure and plans for rebuilding. He also expressed his deep appreciation for Mr. DeMarco's leadership.

Art Riihimaki gave an update on the work of the Nominating Committee. The most pressing need, currently, is for trustees. He expressed the Committee's desire to identify

nominees who are members of churches not currently represented in the Presbytery's leadership and committees.

The Roundtable adjourned at 12:05 p.m., led in closing prayer by the General Presbyter, the Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo.

Respectfully submitted,

-signed-

Rev. David A. Baer, Stated Clerk

DRAFT